Survey on Untouchability by National Law School, Bangaluru

846. DR. JANARDHAN WAGHMARE: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware of the harsh reality that untouchability still persists in villages and it seems to be rampant in Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and West Bengal as per a survey conducted by the National Law School, Bangaluru;

(b) whether it is a fact that Dalits are not allowed to enter temples and fetch water from the public water wells and tanks; and

(c) if so, the steps that are being taken to attain zero-untouchability situation in the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRI D. NAPOLEON): (a) to (c) The National Law School, in their sample study report, 2008, on 'Evaluation of the Protection of Civil Rights Acts, 1955 and its impact on the eradication of untouchability; conducted in the States of Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Madhya Pradesh, Rajasthan and West Bengal, had studied various facets of untouchability.

Article 17 of the Constitution of India has abolished practice of untouchability; its practice in any from is forbidden and is an offence punishable in accordance with law. An Act of Parliament, namely, the Protection of Civil Rights Act, 1955, prescribes punishment for the enforcement of any disability arising from preaching and practice of untouchability.

The said Act is implemented by the concerned State Governments and Union Territory Administrations. With a view to ensure effective implementation of provisions of the Act central assistance is provided to States/Union Territories, which includes strengthening of the enforcement machinery, incentive for inter caste marriages and awareness generation. They are requested to implement provisions of the Act in letter and spirit. Reviews meetings are also held with State Governments from time to time.

Thorium Oxide from Monazite

847. SHRI SHYAMAL CHAKRABORTY:
SHRI MOINUL HASSAN:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) the percentage of Thorium Oxide that can be obtained from Monazite; and

(b) the time schedule for generating nuclear power from the Thorium Oxide (ThO_2)?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE (SHRI PRITHVIRAJ CHAVAN): (a) Monazite available in India contains about 9% Thorium Oxide.